

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS – PLYMOUTH DISTRICT
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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PRESS RELEASE

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BROCKTON, MA- Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz today expressed his shock at the Parole Board's decision to grant parole to Frederick Christian who was convicted in 1998 of the brutal murders of Kepler Desir and Manuel Araujo and the shooting of Carlos Araujo in 1994.

District Attorney Cruz stated, "I am shocked and disappointed at the actions of the parole board in setting this double murderer free. I am still reviewing their findings but even a cursory review demonstrates that Parole Boards findings fly in the face of the evidence at trial and the findings of the jury that convicted Christian of 1st degree murder. The Board has apparently accepted Christian's version of events, which he crafted 20 years after the murders of Kepler Desir and Manuel Araujo and the shooting of Carlos Araujo."

In its decision, the Board states, "The Parole Board concluded that Christian had no advance knowledge of and provided no encouragement or assistance for Horton's spontaneous shooting of the three victims." The facts established at trial proved otherwise. The facts showed that Christian had motive to commit both the robbery and the murders. On the day of the murders, Christian asked the victim Desir to "front" him drugs to sell because he had no money and "his pockets were hurting." Desir said no. Desir also told Christian that he was going to New York that night to buy a large quantity of cocaine, which would cost over \$1,500. Christian was broke, needed money, Desir wouldn't help him, and Christian knew Desir would have a large amount of money on the night of the murders.

The parole board's finding that Christian had a gun the night of the murders but chose not to use is also based solely on Christian's self-serving claims. The facts at the trial,

as noted by the Supreme Judicial Court in affirming his conviction, showed otherwise. The facts at trial established that Christian brought the murder weapon with him that night. A witness had seen Christian with a "chrome" or silver .357 Python handgun in the weeks prior to the murders.

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The evidence showed that Christian grabbed his gun before leaving his apartment with Horton on the night of the murders. The testimony established that only Horton had a gun in the car and the gun he had was a .357 "chrome" handgun with a wood handle. A State Police ballisticsian concluded that the bullet fragments recovered from Manuel Araujo and Kepler Desir were from a .357 revolver or a .38 special and that the gun that fired the bullets was a Colt Python look-alike. The evidence not cited by the Parole Board showed that Christian was seated between Horton and his intended victim Araujo. It showed that Christian leaned back right before the murders to enable his partner a clear line of fire at Carlos. The facts further established that immediately following the cold-blooded assassinations Carlos heard Christian ask Horton, "Did you do him?" and Horton replied, "go through his pockets," after which Carlos felt the defendant moving about the car. Christian then leaned forward in the car and robbed Desir. Horton and Christian then left the car together.

The evidence showed that in the aftermath of the killings, Christian was calm and cool. Christian told one witness to keep his knowledge of the brutal murders "under his hat." and convinced his roommate to lie to the police about his whereabouts. After his arrest, Christian gave the police a false identity and lied about his activities that night.

The Board also ignores the defendant's 31 disciplinary reports while incarcerated. Although defendant converted to Muslim in 1999, and credits religion with changing his behavior, the defendant continued to accrue disciplinary reports until January 23, 2012. The US Supreme Court decision of *Miller v. Alabama* was rendered on January 25, 2012. It is clear the defendant didn't change his conduct until he had something to gain.

District Attorney Cruz also stated, "While the Board now accepts his newest version of events, which he provided at his hearing on May 29, 2014, the jury did not accept his testimony at his trial. The surviving victim and I testified at this hearing and urged the parole board not to set this double murderer free. We provided the trial transcripts to the parole board and crime

scene photos. Those are the best evidence in this case and they do not support the Parole Board's findings or its decision to set this double murderer free."

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